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SHEPTON MALLET
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Including the Report of the Senior Sanitary Inspector

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
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For the Year Ending
31st December, 1954

Shepton Mallet Rural District Council

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS:

Medical Officer of Health (Part-Time):
Dr. T. E. COULSON, M.D., F.R.C.S.E.

Health Visitor:
Miss D. HORRELL.

Senior Sanitary Inspector:
J. J. LAWRENCE, M.R.S.I., Cert. R.S.I. and S.I.E.J. Board.
Cert. Meat and Other Foods.

Additional Sanitary Inspectors:
A. DENMAN, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., Cert. R.S.I. and S.I.E.J. Board.
Cert. Meat and Other Foods.
R. F. PILLEY, M.S.I.A., Cert. R.S.I. and S.I.E.J. Board.
Cert. Meat and Other Foods (From 1.8.54).

Duties of Sanitary Inspectors include:
Sanitary and Housing Administration, Meat and Food Inspection, Control of Refuse Collection and Disposal and Salvage, Council House Administration (Letting and Control of Tenancies) and Rodent Control, and Slaughterhouse Administration.

Part-Time Rodent Officer:
W. J. PALMER.

Clerical Assistant:
Miss N. E. MOON

Committees Dealing with Matters of Public Health:
Public Health Committee,
Housing Committee.

WINCANTON,
SOMERSET.
June, 1955

TO THE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF SHEPTON MALLET.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADY SHEELAH GREENWAY AND GENTLEMEN,—

I beg to lay before you my Annual Report for the year 1954.

1.—GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (in acres)	47,784
Population (1954)	10,840
Rateable Value	£48,691
Produce of a Penny Rate (estimated)	£191

2.—EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

BIRTHS.

LIVE BIRTHS	Males	Females.
Total	80	84
Legitimate	76	82
Illegitimate	4	2
STILLBIRTHS :—		
Total	7	4
Legitimate	7	4
Illegitimate	0	0

DEATHS.

	Total.	Males.	Females.
Deaths from all causes:	132	68	64

Number of Women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth:—

(a) From Sepsis	0
(b) From other causes	0

Deaths of Infants under One Year of Age:—

	Males.	Females.
Total	2	2
Legitimate	2	2
Illegitimate	0	0

Deaths of Infants under One Week	2
,, ,, ,, from One to Four Weeks (inclusive)	2
,, ,, ,, from One to Six Months	0
,, ,, ,, from Six to Twelve Months	0
Total ...	4
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	0
,, ,, Whooping Cough (all ages)	0
,, ,, Diarrhoea (under two years)	0

There has not been any excessive mortality during the year.

The total number of Deaths occuring in the District was 132 compared with 128 in 1953.

The chief causes of Death were:—

Heart Disease and Diseases of the Circulatory System	53
Cancer	23
Intra-cranial Vascular Lesions	25
Old Age	8

In all "Causes of Death":—

Those dying between the ages of 75 and 80 were	23
,, ,, ,, ,, ,, 81 and 85 ,, ...	25
,, ,, ,, ,, ,, 86 and 90 ,, ...	12
And dying above the age of 90	3

A total of 63 or 47.72 per cent. of the total Deaths.

3.—NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospitals.	Total Deaths.
Measles	... 30	0	0
Whooping Cough	... 23	0	0
Pneumonia	... 1	0	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	... 1	1	0
Scarlet Fever	... 4	0	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	... 1	0	0
Erysipelas	... 4	0	0
Tuberculosis—			
(a) Respiratory	... 8	0	0
(b) Non-Respiratory ...	... 1	0	0
	74	1	1

Measles was prevalent throughout the district, especially during the first two months of the year. There were no deaths from this disease.

The notification of Infectious Disease in the District by Medical Practitioners was satisfactory.

4.—OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.

One Case Notified. Sight not affected.

5.—CAUSES OF SICKNESS.

Measles and Whooping Cough and, to a lesser extent, Respiratory Tuberculosis.

6.—SUMMARY OF NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITAL AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE IN THE DISTRICT.

A.—Professional Nursing in the Home:—

(1) General:—There are 10 nurses in the District engaged in general district work, who are affiliated to the County Nursing Association, and between them they cover the whole District.

(2) For Infectious Diseases:—One of the cases of Infectious Disease was removed to Isolation Hospital, the remainder were either nursed by their relatives or by nurses obtained from Nursing Homes or Hospitals outside the District.

B.—Midwives.

There are 10 Certified Midwives practising in the District.

C.—Clinics and Treatment Centres.

None in the District.

D.—Hospitals Situated in the District.

None.

E.—Institutional Provision for Unmarried Mothers, Illegitimate Infants and Homeless Children.

None.

F.—Ambulance Facilities.

(1) For Infectious Cases.—None.

(2) For Non-Infectious Cases and Accidents.—The Motor Ambulance provided by the County Council, and kept at The Ambulance Station, Commercial Road, Shepton Mallet, (Tel. 2242), is used when necessary.

G.—Scabies.

No cases of Scabies have been brought to my notice.

7.—MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENQUIRIES IN RESPECT OF SEWERAGE OR WATER SUPPLIES.

None.

8.—SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

(a) Privately owned—One.—Downside College, Stratton-on-the-Fosse.
Water—Main.
Treatment—Recirculation, Filtration and Automatic Chlorination.

(b) Owned by Local Authority—None.

Estimated average number of bathers daily during Season:—Private swimming pool for scholars at Downside College only.
Samples taken—None.

9.—LABORATORY WORK.

Examinations of bacteriological and pathological specimens are carried out at the Public Health Laboratory at Bath, and considerable use of this Laboratory has been made during the year.

A supply of Diphtheria Antitoxin is kept by Messrs. Boots (Chemists) and Miss Watkins (Chemist) at Shepton Mallet, and can be obtained by Practitioners on the National Health Service Prescription Form.

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10. FOOD POISONING.

No case has been notified during the year.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

1.—Water.

There were no serious shortages of supply in 1954. With the exception of the non-chlorinated supply in the Parish of West Bradley all water supplied to the consumer from the Council's mains was satisfactory in quality.

The scheme for augmenting the water supplies throughout the district and extending the supply to the Parishes of Lydford and Croscombe has now been completed and brought into operation.

Detailed results of bacteriological examinations carried out during the year are as follows:—

(a) Public Water Supplies.

1. Chlorinated Supplies.

Number of samples taken	47
Satisfactory	46
Not quite satisfactory	1
Unsatisfactory	0

2. Untreated Supplies.

Number of samples taken	12
Satisfactory	2
Not quite satisfactory	0
Unsatisfactory	10

(b) Private Piped Supplies used by the Public (untreated)

Number of samples taken	34
Satisfactory	17
Not quite satisfactory	5
Unsatisfactory	12

(c) Other Private Water Supplies (Individual Premises, Farms, etc.)

Number of samples taken	9
Satisfactory	7
Not quite satisfactory	0
Unsatisfactory	2

12 samples were taken for chemical analysis during the year from the Public Supplies and Piped Supplies used by the Public. In all cases the results showed the water to be satisfactory in purity. The water from the majority of these supplies, however, was found to be very hard, the hardness being mainly temporary.

There is no liability to plumbo-solvent action from any of the water supplies.

Appropriate action was taken in cases of unsatisfactory results. Of the 10 unsatisfactory samples of water from untreated supplies mentioned in Para. 1 (a) (2) above, 7 were of raw water from the Ashwick Grove and St. Dunstan's Well sources and this water is adequately treated before being passed to the consumer. The remaining 3 unsatisfactory samples are from the West Bradley Supply, which, owing to its nature, is always unreliable after considerable rainfall.

Available figures in relation to the supply of water in the various parishes are:—

	No. of houses.		No. having piped water supply into or on to the houses.		No. of houses supplied by stand-pipe.		No. supplied by well or other supplies.	
	1953	1954	1953	1954	1953	1954	1953	1954
Ashwick ...	330	331	263	264	46	46	21	21
Batcombe ...	137	138	78	91	18	16	41	31
Binegar ...	89	89	67	67	20	20	2	2
W. Bradley ...	91	92	74	76	11	10	6	6
Cranmore ...	123	123	65	65	36	36	22	22
Croscombe ...	175	175	61	128	93	31	21	16
Ditcheat ...	208	210	182	187	22	19	4	4
Doulting ...	161	162	119	123	22	21	20	18
Downhead ...	34	34	6	8	13	11	15	15
Emborough ...	49	49	37	37	10	10	2	2
Evercreech ...	464	468	398	406	46	46	20	16
Holcombe ...	199	202	180	184	19	18	—	—
Lamyatt ...	45	45	30	32	1	1	14	12
Lydford ...	120	120	9	71	12	12	99	37
M. Clevedon ...	34	34	18	27	13	4	3	3
E. Pennard ...	130	130	59	70	15	15	56	45
Pilton ...	241	244	193	199	24	22	24	23
Pylle ...	49	49	12	35	5	4	32	10
Stoke St. Michael ...	225	241	180	205	34	28	11	8
Stratton-on-the-Fosse ...	445	483	375	417	59	58	11	8
Total ...	3349	3419	2406	2692	519	428	424	299

2. Drainage and Sewerage.

The work of sewering the village of Stoke St. Michael and part of Oakhill village (in Ashwick Parish) and that of sewering part of the village of Stratton-on-the-Fosse was completed during the year.

Future Proposals.

(i) The work of sewering the village of Croscombe was due to commence in January 1955.

(ii) The question of sewering the village of Gurney Slade in the parishes of Ashwick and Binegar has been referred to the Ministry.

(iii) Evercreech. No further progress was made during the year owing to the fact that a comprehensive scheme was still in the course of preparation by the Consulting Engineers.

3. House Refuse Collection.

The Council's Karrier CK 3 (10 cubic yard) lorry with a crew of driver and 2 loaders continued in operation until mid-July, 1954 when the Council's new lorry was delivered. The new lorry is a 12 cubic yard Bedford with a Perkins Diesel Engine. At the year's end the lorry was giving satisfactory service.

During the year 600 loads of refuse were collected.

The tips at Moorwood (Ashwick) and Southwood (Evercreech) continued in use during the year and although no full-time labour is available for their maintenance, they were kept in a very satisfactory condition by the refuse lorry crew.

The same schedule of collection operated as for last year.

4. Salvage.

(i) Waste Paper.—Collections of waste paper were again resumed at the end of the year. 2 tons were collected valued at £3 6 0d.

(ii) Scrap Metal.—During the year 6 tons 10¾ cwt. of scrap metal were collected, valued at £22 0 11d.

HOUSING.

	Houses erected during year		Houses in course of erection		Conversion to flats or dwellings		Temporary such as Army Huts, etc.
	Perm.	Temp.	Perm.	Temp.	Perm.	Temp.	
Local Authority ...	56	—	26	—	—	—	—
Private Enterprise ...	15	1 (Caravan)	Not known	—	—	—	—
Totals	71	1	26	—	—	—	—

Inclusive of those above built during the year:—

Total number of houses in District 3419
Total number of houses owned by Local Authority 479

GRANTS MADE UNDER THE HOUSING ACT, 1949.

No. of applications and houses dealt with by Local Authority and Ministry:—

LOCAL AUTHORITY

	Received		Approved		Rejected		Under Consideration	
	Applications	No. of Houses	Applications	No. of Houses	Applications	No. of Houses	Applications	No. of Houses
(a) to 31/12/53	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
(b) During year	9	10	2	3	1 (withdrawn)	1	6	6

5. SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following report has been furnished to me by the Senior Sanitary Inspector under Article 27 of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations, 1935.

The Inspectors' time was taken up for the most part by visits in connection with meat and food inspection, investigation of complaints and subsequent action, Council House administration and the Housing Survey carried out under the Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954 which was commenced in July 1954. To assist in the Housing Survey a part-time officer was also employed and at the year's end good progress had been made. The results of the Survey will be reported next year.

Full inspection of meat at the Slaughterhouse at Pylle was carried on during the year. When the Ministry gave up Meat Control and the administration of the Slaughterhouse at the end of June 1954, the Council took over the administration of the Slaughterhouse with the Senior Sanitary Inspector in charge. An additional Sanitary Inspector was appointed in July 1954 to assist, inter alia, with the full-time supervision at the slaughterhouse.

Statutory action under the Public Health Acts was again kept to a minimum, informal action securing the abatement of nuisances in the majority of complaints investigated. In any case, complaints received were much reduced.

Unfortunately there was not a great deal of time available for routine inspection of shops, factories, etc.

(a) VISITS.

Dwelling Houses - Public Health Acts 95
Dwelling Houses - Housing Acts 18
Improvement Grant 73
Overcrowding 2
Housing Survey 774
Council Houses 507
Verminous Premises 0
Infectious Disease 0
Disinfections 2
Water Supplies 59
Drainage and Sewage Disposal 129
Drains Tested 8
Offensive Accumulations 1

VISITS (CONTINUED)

Atmospheric Pollution	8
Refuse Collection and Disposal	86
Salvage	2
Rats and Mice Suppression	2032
Stables/Piggeries	3
Moveable Dwellings	18
Schools	9
Factories and Workshops	4
Outworkers	0
Butchers	22
Ice-cream Dealers	2
Dairies	1
Milk Distributors	4
Public Houses	4
Other Food Premises	7
Meat Inspection and Slaughterhouse	834
Other Food Inspection	49
Interviews	113
Miscellaneous	274

(b) NOTICES.

	Informal	Statutory
Served during the year	17	—
Complied with during the year	22	—
Outstanding at the end of the year	33	—

(c) LIST OF WORKS EXECUTED AS A RESULT OF NOTICES.

i. HOUSING.

Cleaning of houses	2
Roofs repaired/renewed	2
Chimney Stacks repaired/renewed	1

ii. DRAINAGE.

Drains cleared	2
Soil drains repaired/renewed	4
Cesspools provided	1
Cesspools repaired	1
New Sewage disposal plants	2
Connections to sewer	2

iii. SANITARY AND OTHER CONVENIENCES.

W.C.'s substituted	2
W.C.'s repaired	2

iv. MISCELLANEOUS CONTRAVENTIONS.

Nuisances from animals abated	1
Miscellaneous P.H. Act contraventions remedied	1

v. FOOD PREMISES.

F. & D. Act Contraventions remedied	7

(d) SMOKE ABATEMENT (DUST).

One nuisance from quarry dust was reported during the year and informal action was also necessary in certain other cases in respect of dust from stone quarries with reasonably satisfactory results.

(e) CAMPING SITES.

1 camping site for 40 caravans was re-licensed during the year.

(f) RAG FLOCK.

There are no premises in the district in which rag flock is manufactured or sold.

(g) RATS AND MICE.

The Council's part-time Rodent Operator continued surveying and 107 premises were treated for rats but none for mice. Very few complaints were received. The Sewers at Evercreech and the stream at Croscombe were treated in addition to the Council's refuse tips and sewage disposal plants with satisfactory results.

(h) INSECT PESTS.

No cases of infestation were reported during the year.

FACTORIES.

1. Inspection for purpose of provisions as to Health.

Premises (i)	No. on Register (ii)	Inspections (iii)	Written Notices (iv)	Occs. Prosecuted (v)
i. Factories in which Sec. 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by the Local Authorities	12	—	—	—
ii. Factories not included in (i) in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	55	4	—	—
iii. Other premises in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises) ...	—	—	—	—
Total	67	4	Nil	Nil

2. Cases in which Defects were found.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Insp.	Referred by H.M. Insp.	
Want of cleanliness (S1)	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable Temperature (S3) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S6) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S7)					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences (not including offences relating to Homework)	—	—	—	—	—
Total	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

3. Outworkers.

There were 61 outworkers in the district, all but one employed in the gloving industry by firms outside the district.

HOUSING.

1. Action under Housing Act, 1936 - (Sec. 9 and Sec. 11).

General Remarks.

No formal action was taken under Sec. 9 but informal action resulted in repairs being effected wherever possible. Demolition proceedings were instituted in 2 cases - one house being demolished and an undertaking not to relet until made fit accepted in the other case.

2. Overcrowding.

No cases of overcrowding occurred during the year and there are no cases on the Council's register.

3. Housing Act, 1949 - Improvement Grants.

At mid-year with the transfer of Improvement Grant Administration to Local Authorities enquiries began to be made and continued throughout the remainder of the year. Up to the end of the year 22 genuine enquiries in respect of Improvement Grants were made and the properties inspected and reports forwarded to the applicant. Of these 22 enquiries it was thought at the time of visit, that 17 of them might result in formal applications. Up to the end of the year 9 formal applications were received but one was subsequently withdrawn. Of the remaining 8, 2 were approved by the Council and the remainder were under consideration at the end of the year. The 2 formal applications approved concerned the improvement of 3 houses.

4. Housing Programme.

56 Council houses were completed and occupied during the year.

The number of applicants on the waiting list on December 31st was 235, a decrease of 36 on the previous year. The total figure of 235 applications does not represent the number of new houses required. The total number of applications on the Council's Housing list includes applicants who have no connection with the district and are doubtless on other authority's housing lists, applicants who wish only to be considered for cheaper (pre-war) accommodation and applicants with very poor cases indeed. If the number of those applications are deducted from the total, a smaller and more reasonable number results. These factors must be taken into consideration when referring to the number of new houses required for re-housing needy applicants.

Total number of applications for Council houses at the close of the year (In rooms 65)	235
Number of houses erected by the Local Authority during the year	56
Number of houses in course of erection by the Local Authority	26
Number of houses erected by Private Enterprise during the year	15
Number of unfit houses licensed for habitation	15
Number of houses continuing to be requisitioned by the Council	6
Number of houses previously condemned, not licensed but still occupied ...	4

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

1. Milk Supply.

Number of Retailers (not producers)	6
Heat Treatment Plants	1

Designated Milk.

Number of Retailers T.T. Milk	3
Number of Retailers Pasteurised Milk	1

2. Ice-Cream.

No. of Premises registered for:—

(a) Manufacture	Nil
(b) Sale	32

Samples were regularly taken from the various retailers most of whom were selling pre-packed ice-cream from well-known manufacturers.

3. Preserved Food, Etc. Sec. 14 Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

No. of persons registered for the Manufacture of sausages under the above ... 5

4. Meat and Other Foods (Inspections and Condemnations).

	Cattle Excl. Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number Killed	775	683	10293	5666	2901
Number Inspected	775	683	10293	5666	2901
All Diseases except Tuberculosis.					
Whole Carcases condemned	5	17	88	20	168
Carcases of which some parts or organs were condemned	250	419	122	880	1206
Percentage of the number inspected infected with disease other than tuberculosis ...	32.9	63.8	2.0	15.9	47.4
Tuberculosis Only.					
Whole Carcases condemned	6	6	10	—	10
Carcases of which some parts or organs were condemned	36	109	9	—	46
Percentage of the number inspected infected with Tuberculosis	5.4	16.8	0.2	—	1.9

Total weight of diseased/unsound food condemned:—
25 tons 1 cwt. 3 qtrs. 4 lbs.

Other Foods Surrendered.

3 tins Meat 89 tins Vegetables 24 tins Fruit	Total Weight:— 83 lbs. 10½ ozs.

5. Byelaws Under Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

These came into operation in the Shepton Mallet Rural District in July, 1950. Informal action was taken in some cases and this achieved the necessary results.

Notices (provided by the Council) have been exhibited in food shops requesting Customers not to bring their dogs into the shops.

6. Food Premises.

Business Carried On	Total	Inspections	Notices Served	Contraventions Remedied
Butchers only	3	9	—	—
Butcher and Sausage Manufacturer (Sec. 14) ...	5	13	—	—
Public House only	33	4	—	—
Public House and Restaurant	3	—	—	—
Public House and Ice-Cream Dealer (Sec. 14) ...	2	—	—	—
Public House, Restaurant & Ice-Cream Dealer (Sec. 14)	1	—	—	—
Grocer	22	4	—	—
Grocer and Ice-Cream Dealer (Sec. 14) ...	20	2	—	—
Bakehouse only	6	1	—	—
Bakehouse and Ice-Cream Dealer (Sec. 14) ...	2	—	—	—
Bakehouse and Grocer	1	—	—	—
Confectioner only	3	—	—	—
Restaurant or Canteen	7	1	—	—
Restaurant, Grocer & Ice Cream Dealer (Sec. 14)	1	—	—	—
Ice-Cream Dealer only (Sec. 14)	5	—	—	—
Food Factory	1	—	—	—
Food Factory with Canteen	1	1	—	—
Wet and Fried Fish	2	—	—	—
Cheese Store	2	—	—	—
Total	120	35	Nil	Nil

7. Disposal of Condemned Food.

Tinned Foods etc. are buried at the Refuse Tips, meat being disposed of to fertiliser manufacturers.

8. Slaughterhouses.

Number of Registered Slaughterhouses	Nil
Number of Licensed Slaughterhouses	1
Number of Public Slaughterhouses in use	1
Licensed Knackers Yards	Nil
Total number of animals slaughtered during the year 20,318	

9. Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933.

A register of all licensed slaughtermen pursuant to Section 3 (1) of the above Act is kept and the number so licensed is 15.

I have the honour to be, Mr. Chairman, Lady Sheelah and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

T. E. COULSON,

Medical Officer of Health.